GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1748
ANSWERED ON:03.03.2003
LINKING OF GANGA CAUVERY RIVERS
R.L. JALAPPA

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the former director of Asian Development Bank has submitted any study report on linking the Ganga and Cauvery Rivers;

(b) if so, the estimated cost likely to be involved therein;

(c) the present status of Ganga-Cauvery link project;

(d) whether the Government have convened any meeting of Chief Ministers of beneficiary States; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the outcome thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SMT. BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY)

(a) to (e) No study report on linking the Ganga and Cauvery Riversby the former director of Asian Development Bank has been received. However, the Ganga-Cauvery link as proposed by Dr. K.L. Rao was examined by Central Water Commission and found to be grossly under estimated. Besides, the proposal was also devoid of any flood control benefit and required large block of power for lifting water, therefore, the proposal was not pursued further. The Ministry of Water Resources, then knownas the Ministry of Irrigation, formulated a National Perspective Plan for water resources development in 1980 which envisages inter linkages among Peninsular Rivers and Himalayan Rivers for transferring water fromwater surplus basins to water deficit areas for optimum utilisation of water resources. The Government of India established the National Water Development Agency (NWDA) in 1982 as an autonomous society to carryout water balance and other studies and prepare feasibility reports. NWDA hasidentified 30 links under the National Perspective Plan for preparation of the feasibility reports and has completed feasibility reports of 6 links under Peninsular Component. As per the present tentative estimate, the cost of implementation of identified inter basin water transfer link schemes, both in Peninsular and Himalayan Component at 2002 price level is Rs 5,60,000 crore.The Central Government has setup a Task Force under the Chairmanship of Shri SureshPrabhu, Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) on December 13, 2002 with the following term of reference:-

i) Provide guidance on norms of appraisal of individual projects in respect of economic viability, socio-economic impacts, environmental impacts and preparation of resettlement plans;

ii) Devise suitable mechanism for bringing about speedy consensus amongst the States;

iii) Prioritize the different project components for preparation of Detailed Project Reports and implementation;

iv) Propose suitable organizational structure for implementing the project;

v) Consider various modalities for project funding; and

vi) Consider international dimensions that may be involved in some project components. The Task Force is working to suggest and guide the task of achieving the goal of interlinking of rivers by the end of 2016.